



Figure 9.5. Annual catch per unit effort (CPUE, bushels/trip) for bay scallop dredges only (mechanical) and hand harvest of bay scallops in North Carolina, 1994-2004. DMF Trip Ticket Program.

Prohibited take

No action to improve the recovery of the bay scallop population will prolong the existence of a small fishery with little economic return to the participants. The most recent decrease in landings value is the lowest on record (See the Socioeconomic aspects of the bay scallop fishery section). Full recovery of the population could take a number of years and depends on many variables. The structure of the fishery during and after a recovery period will probably change based on the severity of the management measures. DMF did not open a bay scallop harvest season this past year (2006).

Prohibiting the take of bay scallops will require DMF to monitor the stock in the absence of commercial landings using a fishery independent survey(s). Stock indicators will need to be established in order to allow restricted harvest if the population level shows improvement. DMF cannot quantify a stock indicator from the current monitoring program. The most consistent fishery independent sampling has only occurred well after the red tide event of 1987-88 when commercial landings have been very low for bay scallops as compared to the rest of the time period. Historical knowledge of the independent sampling program may be the only avenue in which a stock indicator is determined at this time using this sampling design.

DMF Fishery independent sampling of bay scallops for management information in North Carolina has been conducted since 1975, and has varied from monthly